

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Santa Clara Unit



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CAL FIRE Suspends Burn Permits in Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa counties and the western portions of Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties

Morgan Hill – After a wet winter, warming temperatures are quickly drying out the abundant annual grass crop. The increasing fire danger posed by the high volume of dead grass and hotter, drier conditions in the region is prompting CAL FIRE to suspend all burn permits for outdoor residential burning within the State Responsibility Area of Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa counties and the western portions of Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties. This suspension takes effect July 3, 2017 and bans all outdoor burning of landscape debris such as branches and leaves.

“We are asking that residents not be lulled into a false sense of security on the heels of an exceptionally wet winter,” said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. “The abundant dead grass will only serve as a fuse to the heavier vegetation still suffering the lasting effects of 5 years of extreme drought.”

CAL FIRE Santa Clara Unit Chief Derek J. Witmer would like to remind everyone “That despite record rainfall this past year we have already experienced more wildfires through June than last year during the same time.” Please remain vigilant and cautious when working and playing outside this fire season.”

Since January 1, 2017 CAL FIRE and firefighters across the state have already responded to over 2,135 wildfires. While outdoor burning of landscape debris by homeowners is no longer allowed, CAL FIRE is asking residents to ensure that they are prepared for wildfires by maintaining a minimum of 100 feet of Defensible Space around every home and building on their property.

Here are some tips to help prepare homes and property:

- Clear all dead and or dying vegetation 100 feet from around all structures.
- Landscape with fire resistant/drought tolerant plants
- Find alternative ways to dispose of landscape debris like chipping or hauling it to a biomass energy or green waste facility

The department may issue restricted temporary burning permits if there is an essential reason due to public health and safety. Agriculture, land management, fire training, and other industrial-type burning may proceed if a CAL FIRE official inspects the burn site and issues a special permit.

The suspension of burn permits for residential landscape debris does not apply to campfires within organized campgrounds or on private property. Campfires may be permitted if the campfire is maintained in such a manner as to prevent its spread to the wildland. A campfire permit can be obtained at local fire stations or online at PreventWildfireCA.org.

For additional information on how to create Defensible Space, as well as tips to prevent wildfires, visit www.ReadyForWildfire.org.

CAL FIRE has launched a new Ready for Wildfire app which can be downloaded to your iOS or Android device. While being a great educational tool, the Ready for Wildfire app also provides critical wildfire alerts. Users can sign-up for customized alerts that will send a text or push notification to their device when a CAL FIRE is responding or assisting to a wildfire in their area. Additionally, users can set up alerts for single counties, multiple counties, or statewide. If a user travels or enjoys recreating in forested areas, CAL FIRE has that covered, too! The app lets users enable an alert system to notify them if a wildfire is reported within 30 miles of their device.

To download the app, visit the App Store or the Google Play Store – search for CAL FIRE and install. You are now on your way to becoming Ready for Wildfire.

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